



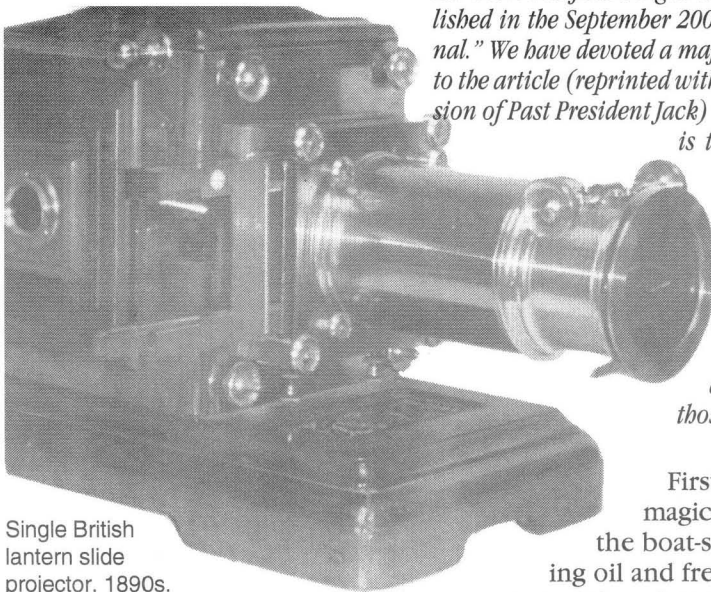
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THE MAGIC OF THE LANTERN

By Jack Judson



Single British
lantern slide
projector, 1890s.

Ed. note: The following article was first published in the September 2000 "Antiques Journal." We have devoted a majority of this issue to the article (reprinted with the kind permission of Past President Jack) because we feel it is the most comprehensive and easily understood answer to that question, "What is a magic lantern?" Keep it, copy it, and share it with those who ask.

First, what is not a magic lantern? It is not the boat-shaped lamp using oil and frequently and erroneously referred to as a magic lantern. Such incorrect references are usually simply a mistake in terminology.

Such items are really lamps, and not lanterns, and those lamps are often thought of as something you rub, and "Jeannie" or a genie pops out to do your bidding.

It might be wonderful, indeed, if some "Jeannie" or genie would pop out of a magic lantern, and certainly this collector has rubbed all his collection of magic lanterns with nothing but a projected image coming out anywhere but from the lens. In fact, a magic lantern is, in the simplest terms, the earliest form of slide projector. It must have a light source inside some sort of container, a place to insert a slide, and a lens out front to project the image from the slide. So, hopefully, we are now through the definitions and have dispelled the incorrect descriptions and images.

INSIDE

- On Photographic Lantern Slides
- Vermont's Hand-painted Theater Curtains
- Members in the Spotlight
- Bits and Pieces

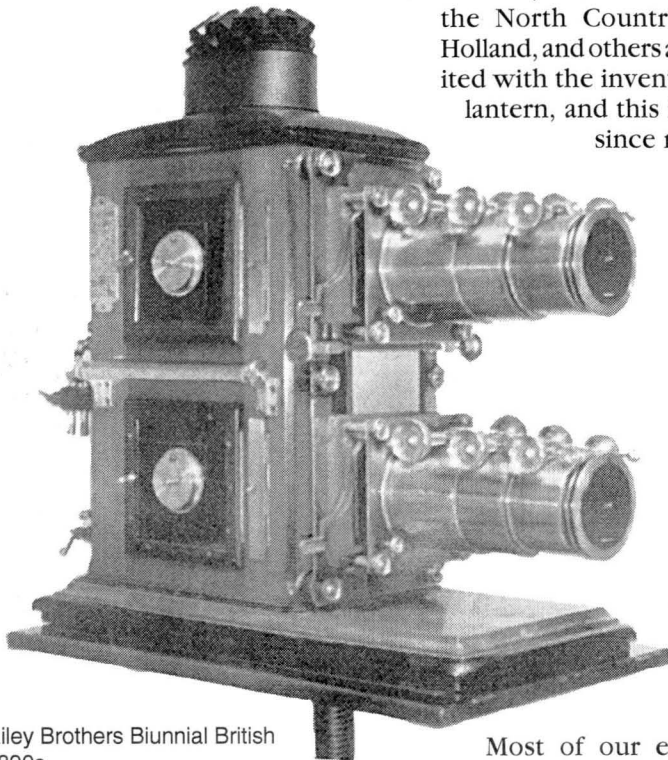
The magic lantern, or *lanterna magica*, *lantern magique*, *tooverlantern*, or *zauberlanterne* in any language is an early slide projector which used an oil burner (lamp), sometimes (rarely) a candle, and later increasingly sophisticated light sources, as gas light, limelight, and light from electrical sources, such as the electric arc light, and then the electric light bulb.

The earliest published mention of the magic lantern was contained in a scholarly work by a German Jesuit priest in Rome, Athanasius Kircher, who described it in the 1640s volume entitled *Ars Magna Lucis et Umbrae* or *The Art of Light and Shadow*. The first edition did not

continued page 2



The magic of the LANTERN continued



Riley Brothers Biennial British 1890s.

contain an image of what Kircher described. But a later edition did have an image, which continues to be the subject of extensive discussion. The woodcut image shows the slide in, right side up, and the projected image likewise, which even to this day with all of our modern technology does not work. In addition the projecting lens is shown behind the slide, and that again seems an unlikely workable arrangement.

Kircher, as well as Walgenstein from the North Countries, Huygens of Holland, and others are variously credited with the invention of the magic lantern, and this is not so unusual since many discoveries

in history are variously credited, sometimes along nationalistic lines. Nonetheless, it is well established that the magic lantern or slide projector existed for some time prior to the 1640s, with some evidence of a much earlier date for its first appearance in the world of technology.

Most of our early information about magic lanterns comes from various writings in the 1700s, when itinerant showmen traveled about Europe with such devices and some slides, all of which were hand-made. Images were projected onto light colored walls or light colored cloth hangings, and stories were told about what the images depicted. Fairy tales, folk tales, historical images, all hand-painted on glass, were the usual fare. Sometimes a hurdy gurdy or other musical instrument was played in accompaniment. Naturally, such performances were quite magical to people who, for the most part at that

time, did not have sufficient education to really understand how pictures could magically come out of what had been just a lantern, simply giving out light to see by.

Some lanternists would also rent a hall, auditorium or space to have shows for an entrance fee. These seem to have been popular entertainments and/or lectures, and were so reported in the press of the day.

The earliest published notice in America, so far as is known, is one that appeared in the *Boston Evening Post*, December 3, 1743. It read: "To be shewn by John Dabney, mathematical instrument maker in Milk Street, Boston, on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday evenings, from five to eight o'clock for the entertainment of the curious, the magic lantorn, an optick machine, which exhibits a great number of wonderful and surprising figures, prodigious large and vivid, at half crown each, old tenor." This seems to be all we know about the show, but it sounded fascinating, and certainly so to the folks of that time.

From that time here in the colonies, and later throughout the world, such devices and their images became more and more popular as a mass visual delight. In particular it developed impetus when more and more people realized the opportunities for profit and for education.

The Gazette

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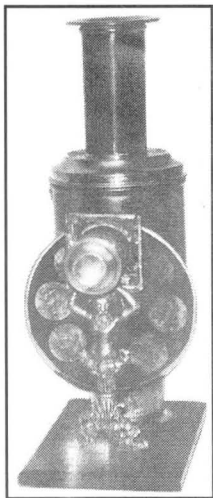
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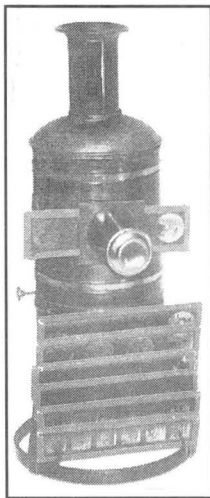
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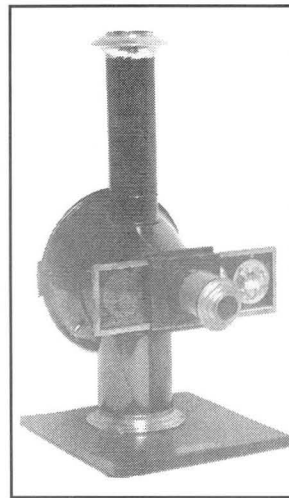
Atlas Joy Magic
Lantern w/circular
slide. 1880
Germany, Jean
Schoenner.



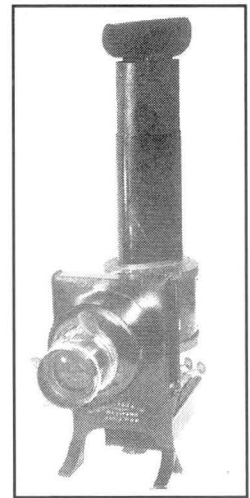
The Jubilee Grand
Bavaria, Jean
Schoenner, 1895.



Lampascope.



By Carl Muller,
Vienna, 1885.



McAlister, New
York, 1890s

Accordingly, by the early 1800s and throughout the rest of that century, especially due to the advent of more manufacturing facilities and then photography in the late 1830s, magic lantern production swelled to a very large industry in Europe and in America. Even in the closed country of Japan, it is said that the Dutch brought the magic lantern, *furo*, to Japan in the 1600s. Projection there was not, of course, as large as America's or Europe's but developed roughly parallel to the other nations.

The British produced many beautifully crafted and optically sophisticated magic lanterns of mahogany and brass and a few toy magic lanterns. Germany is best known for producing a wonderful variety of children's toy magic lanterns. Most seem to have been manufactured in Nuremburg, by one of several makers. The most commonly known of these are: Ernst Planck (E.P.), Johannes Falk (J.F.), Max Dannhorn (M.D.), Jean Schoenner (J.S.), Georg Carette (G.C. Co. N), and Gerbruder Bing (GBN). If marked at all, the initials are what are generally found on the toy lanterns.

Some of the children's toy magic lanterns were really quite ornate or fanciful, even figural. Some had the shape of a small factory building, a pagoda, a race car, a bust of a Chinaman, or even the Eiffel Tower, though the latter two at least have been attributed to another maker, Aubert. These unusual forms, and those with porcelain features and/or highly decorated ones, are eagerly sought after by collectors. Most such toys were lighted by tiny oil lamps inside them.

The larger, more complex magic lanterns produced largely in the mid to late 1800s were used mostly by professional showmen, universities, churches, scientific societies, and lecturers giving travelogues with photographic glass slides. There were many British makers of such devices, such as Hughes, Riley Brothers, J.H. Steward, the Darkers, Watson, and of course, the very large and long-lived Ross. These are the most well-known producers of wonderfully attractive, well-made and functional lantern slide projectors, as they had by that time become known. Though many were of the wood and brass variety, there were also cheaper, light-weight models made of what was commonly

known as Russian iron, or blued steel, and sometimes finished by Japanning (painting), mostly in basic black. Some smaller versions were made for children as well.

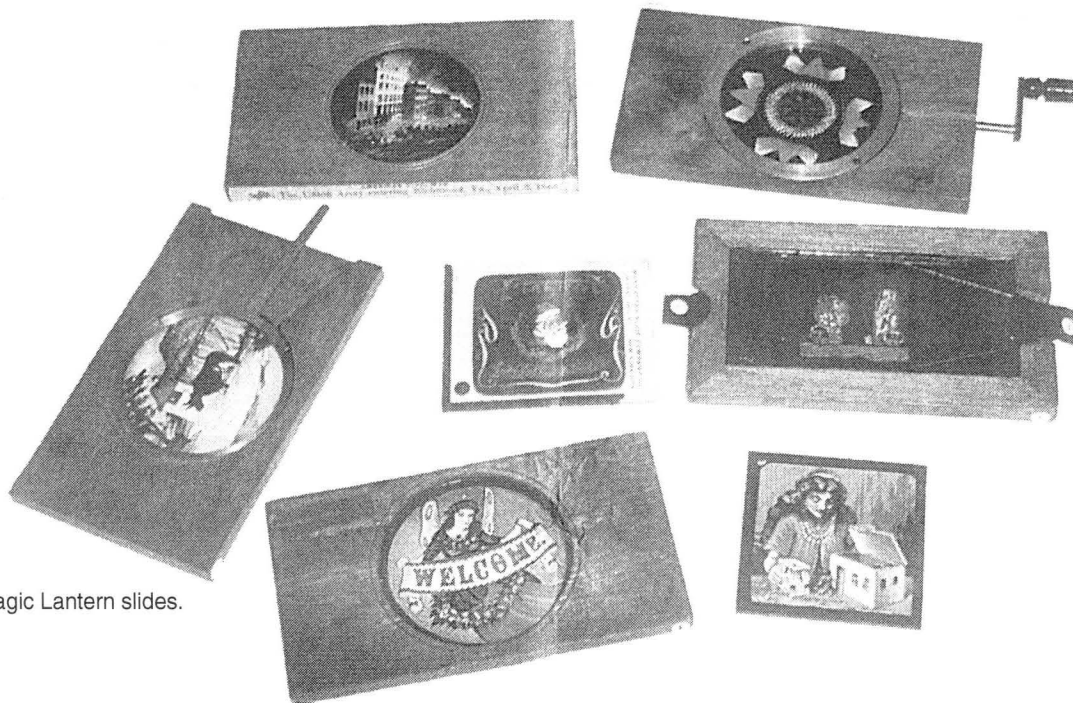
Some of the magic lanterns were equipped with more than one lens out front, two and sometimes three. Some people have considered more than one lens to indicate that the machine was for stereo or 3D projection. This is not the case. Two or three lenses arranged either vertically, or horizontally in some cases, simply allowed the projectionist to "dissolve" from one image to another without going to total darkness or a flash of light between slides. It also allowed for "special effects," such as

continued page 4



Porcelain figurine,
Meissen, 1880s.

The magic of the LANTERN continued



Full size Magic Lantern slides.

changing a view from day to night or summer to winter or to add an angel to a scene of someone dying, or a star or moon to rise in the night sky.

Some beautiful toy magic lanterns were produced in France by the makers Carree and Lapiere. Companies such as Molteni and Mazo made a wide variety of mostly metal construction, with some well designed for scientific projection, such as for microscope slides. There are few surviving examples from other European countries, though some are known to be from Switzerland.

For the most part, magic lanterns in America were metal, occasionally with some wooden parts such as lens boards. There were several well-known makers in America as well, such as A.T. Thompson of Boston, J.W. Queen, Marcy and McAllister of Philadelphia and New York. McIntosh in Chicago made several interestingly designed lantern slide projectors. However, there were many other makers coast to coast, and in

somewhat later years, Bausch and Lomb, Spencer Optical, and even Eastman Kodak after the turn of the 20th century turned out some functional basic black models. Oddly, Charles Beseler Co., in business from the 1800s produced lantern slide projectors into the 1980s.

Thus magic lanterns/lanternslide projectors were widely used throughout the world, for many of the purposes already mentioned, but additionally as teaching devices, scientific demonstration devices and even in the activities of what were then known as secret societies or lodges. Churches used them to project the words of hymns for the congregation, and during the Franco Prussian War in the 1870s, Microdot messages were flown into Paris via pigeons, or balloons, and the tiny images were projected by a scientific style magic lantern using a projecting microscope front.

Many, many illustrations used with magic lanterns appeared in books and periodicals of all sorts in America and in Europe.

Collecting magic lanterns has become quite a passion, and more than a hobby to some. Collectors vary from those with a passing interest only, to folks who collect only some types;



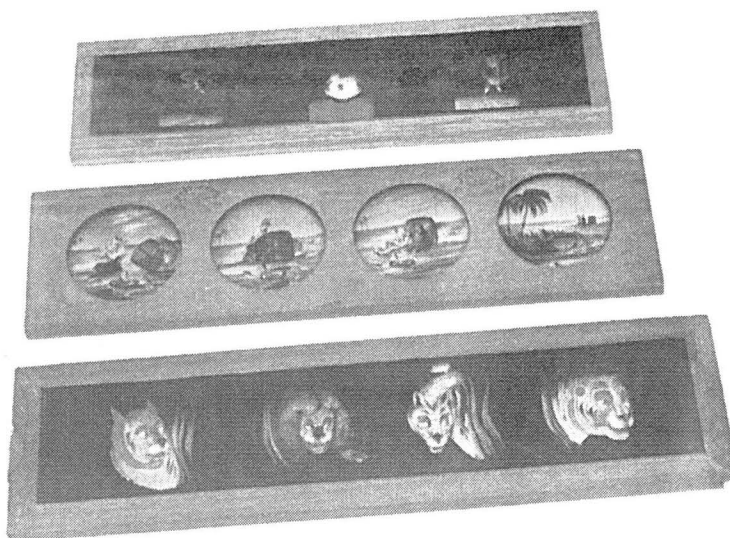
Porcelain figurine, French 1873.

while some collectors garner all related materials, both the projectors themselves, and also accessories, illustrations, prints, slides, catalogs, and figurines of porcelain and bronze depicting magic lanterns, or magic lanternists.

Of course, there are the projectors to collect, and there is a very wide variety over many time periods to collect. The older the time period, the harder. This is particularly true in Europe, since several wars have decimated the stock to collect. Indeed, good examples are becoming more difficult to find every year. This is especially true of the most rare, which are usually the German or French figural or highly embossed or decorated metal types, such as one that has the shape of the Eiffel Tower, a bust of a Chinaman, a small race car, or those made of porcelain. Many collectors specialize in children's toy magic lanterns.

Certainly they are pretty things and small, so the collector does not have to add onto his or her home or build a museum to hold a collection.

The glass slides are also very important collectibles in the magic lantern related collectibles. First there are the children's toy magic lantern slides. The most commonly found are those made in Germany, and frequently are rectangular strips of glass of many sizes, with blue, green, red, orange, pink or yellow paper edging glued on them so as not to cut children's busy hands. Most slides of this type are not hand-painted as is frequently thought, but rather are transfers or decals stuck onto the glass slides. This is not to say that there were not, and are not today, surviving children's glass slides that are hand-painted. There are just fewer of them. Most such children's slides of the strip type seem to come from Germany and France. One can examine a slide and know by the look



Large wood mounted multi-image slides.

of the image what kind it is. In the case of the transfers, the image is often scratched or crazed, though it is certainly possible to scratch a painted slide as well.

This type of transfer slide was produced in the many thousands over a period from the mid-1800s to the 1920s or so, and shipped all over the world. Hundreds, if not thousands, exist all over the United States today and were no doubt imports. Unless they are in mint or perfect condition and in a set, they are somewhat less collectible than some to be later described. However, the strip transfer slides are often quite charming and fanciful.

Then come the larger rectangular glass slides. If they are 3.25 by 4 inches, they are generally thought of as American size. If they are 3.2 inches square, then they are known as the British size. However, both sizes seem to have been produced in countries other than the United States and England. Most of these two sizes of slides consist of two sheets of glass, one of which has the image on one side of it and the other which covers the image, and bound all around by a black paper tape. Some tape colors varied, sometimes as a result of a repair.

Such slides were produced by black and white photography, and remain that way on many. If they are colored, it was necessary to hand color them, since for all practical purposes, color photography was not widely available during the peak production of this type slide. There were some French and other attempts to make colored photographic lantern slides with starch grains, but they did not survive in large numbers, and had a tendency to be somewhat fragile.

Additionally, many popular slides produced in Britain were also transfer slides of children's fairy or folk tales, such as Alice in Wonderland, John Gilpin's Ride, Cinderella, and so on. They were sold in boxed sets of eight to 12 or more, and covered more subjects than mentioned before. Such sets also came with what is referred to as a reading, or script describing the story slide by slide. Many of the readings are today lost.

There are many French slides which were of the transfer type, and some hand-painted ones as well. They seem to mostly have a green paper edging,

continued page 6

The magic of the LANTERN continued

and usually illustrate a fairy tale. They frequently have some wording telling the story on one end of the slide.

The American sized slides were produced in the hundreds of thousands, and covered just about every imaginable subject. Yes, some were even X-rated! Some American slides were called lightweight with only one piece of glass without a cover glass and framed in a light cardboard. They are, of course, more fragile and prone to scratching or other damage.

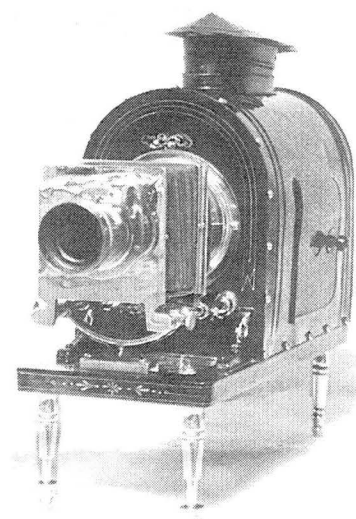
The most prolific producers of slides in America included the Keystone Company, Underwood and Underwood, McIntosh, McAllister, the Detroit Publishing Company, and the list goes on. Many of the slides produced by these companies were of the educational or travel type and

came mostly in black and white. The very prolific Keystone Company produced the slides with accompanying oak cabinets in sets of 600 and 1,200 for schools and libraries. Some sets came also with additional cabinature for holding sets of stereoview cards, a hand-held viewer, and a lantern slide projector as well. Many slides were simply one half of a stereo pair. The Detroit Publishing Company turned out many such items, including some by the famous photographer W.H. Jackson.

Some lecturers like Jackson were also photographers, and among them were the well known John Stoddard and Burton Holmes, both famous for lantern slide illustrated travelogue lectures.

Many businesses and show people used the magic lantern for advertising. Among those are such diverse types as the Santa Fe Railroad, the Holland America Line, P.T. Barnum and, of course, the early motion picture producers who advertised soon to be shown movies and local advertisements. This latter type of "coming attractions" slides has recently become a very hot collecting area; some bring hundreds of dollars.

Many religious slides were produced, and two particular sets were very popular but are not found too easily today. One set is of the popular story "In

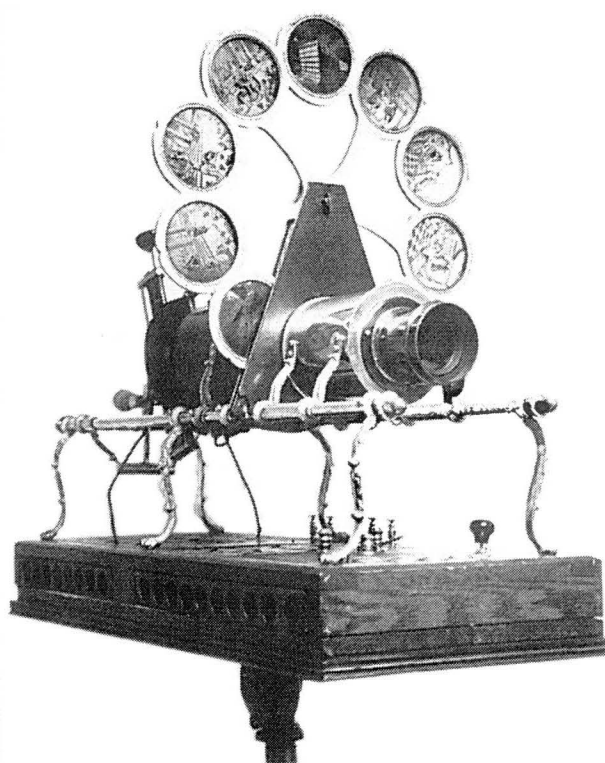


Single lantern slide projector. McIntosh Chicago, 1890s.

His Steps," and the other "The Photo History of Creation."

But some of the most desirable slides for the serious magic lantern, or lantern slide collector are those in wooden frames. These come in all sorts of sizes and configurations and are most often not marked by the maker. The most common of this type measures approximately 4" by 7", and about 3/8" thick. There is generally one 3 to 3.25" circular glass image centered in the dimensions given. These slides are, if not handpainted entirely, at least hand tinted on a black and white positive photograph. Most came in sets illustrating some story of patriotic, religious, or lodge content. Some were also scientific in nature. Many were sold in sets of varying numbers to the set. This appears true according to extant sets and numbers on them, plus references in catalogs of the time.

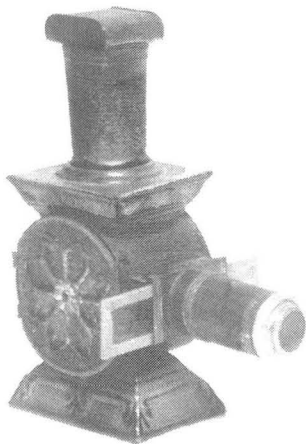
Next in the hierarchy of importance to collectors of the genre are those wood mounted glass slides that have various fixed and moving pieces of glass, with some painting on each. These vary widely in type and sub-



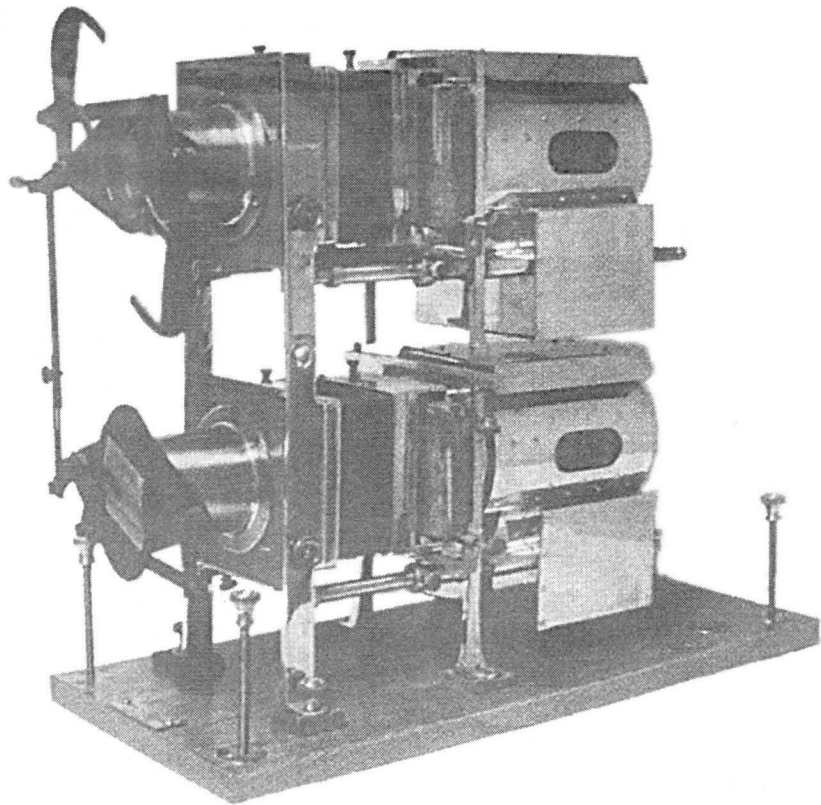
Electric arc lodge lantern. Pettibone Brothers, Ohio.

ject, many of a humorous nature or providing some primitive motion. The simplest are what are called slip slides, or sliders. They have one fixed painted image, and one or two slip glasses that move in and out of the horizontal axis of the frame. There is also a slip slide that not only has one fixed and/or one slipping piece, but also has another piece of glass that has a lever that moves that piece up and down, all of which give different motions to the figures painted on them

Additionally, there are some slides known as rackwork or rotary wood mounted slides. These usually have one fixed and one moving circular piece of glass with an image painted on each, with tiny brass gear teeth around the edges rotated by a pinion gear from a crank on the end of the slide. Again there are more complex slides, with the crank/rotary and a lever or slipping piece as well. Some wooden slides are up to three feet long and have panoramic views which are passed through the slide opening in the magic lantern, with a story to go along with the images. Some of these have one fixed image and one long piece of glass that slides across, showing for example a fixed picture of the pyramids, with the sliding piece having a caravan painted on it. The caravan appears to pass in front of the pyramids as the move-



Lanterne Salon 1880, Lapierre, France.



A.T. Thompson Boston. Biennial w/dissolvers, 1899.

able glass is drawn across the fixed image. These are very desirable for the serious collector.

There are also wood mounted slides showing scientific illustrations, some fixed, and some in sets with moving parts to show the motions of the solar system and various other celestial phenomena. One problem involving these slides is that many are a proprietary size, and not all fit all magic lanterns. This is particularly true of the children's slides. Of course, condition of the slides is critical to collectability and value. Peeling paint, split wood, cracked or broken glass, missing parts, corrosion, bent or damaged metal parts, and malfunctioning units all detract. Certainly the same criteria apply to the magic lanterns themselves.

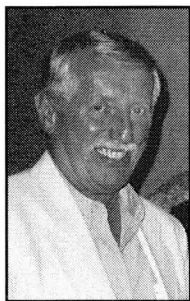
Very desirable are prints showing the magic lantern in use, catalogs of magic

lantern makers or purveyors, and instruction manuals. Illustrations and books dealing with the magic lantern are also sought after by the serious collector.

Thus, there is a wide variety of items to be collected in the wonderful magic lantern field. The magic lantern is certainly the father of motion pictures, and the grandfather of television.

Further information can be obtained by accessing www.magiclanterns.org, and much can be learned by joining the magic lantern society of United States and Canada at www.magiclanternsociety.org.

The author is the past president of the Magic Lantern Society and is the owner of the Magic Lantern Castle Museum, which is a member of both the American and Texas Associations of Museums.



FROM THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

By Ralph Shape

The robins are singing, the blossoms are popping out and the garage sale signs are sprouting in the neighborhood, a sure sign that spring is nearly here. Not a moment too soon as the winter blaahs become nearly overwhelming.

That urge to buy something new to add to your collection becomes stronger as the sun moves further north. Caution is always prudent. Antique dealers and e-Bay sellers are not always knowledgeable or truthful about what they have. Brings to mind a phone call I received recently from an east coast resident. He had visited antique shops in Montreal and in one discovered a mysterious object of which he had no knowledge. The dealer informed him it was a magic lantern over a hundred years old and very rare. As he described it to me, it was a small nearly square metal box with the little feet and a door on the side. It had a reflector, a burner, and a chimney out the top that went up and curved to the rear. The buyer asked about the lens. The dealer said there was no lens, only a hole in the front. The dealer had told him that many lanterns didn't require a lens. Some came with one, some without. I had to ask if the dealer spoke with a German accent as I had bought my first lantern in Berlin under quite similar circumstances. What sealed the deal for this unsuspecting shopper was it came with six slides which measured about one inch by six inches. The dealer said that these slides usually sold for \$50 each. My

challenge was to encourage his interest in the lantern without belittling the "great deal" he had gotten.

The Society's web site is finally undergoing some revision. After several years of toil in originating, managing, and operating the site, Jack Judson has asked for relief and transfer of all responsibility for the site. The Society owes a great deal of gratitude and thanks to Jack for his economic support of the site and also his time in answering the hundreds of emails that it generated and for the many new members it has brought us. We all have ideas about what we would like on the web site. The challenge is to get the information from our computers onto the Internet. The technical part is beyond many of our capabilities. Terry Borton has volunteered to manage the site. As most of you are aware, he has a beautiful web site for his theatre. Even Terry admits to technical inability and has an expert do that part of it. The Society will hire that expert to update our site, Terry will manage the operation, and the officers will be responsible for content and responding to emails. Hopefully, this joint effort will prove successful.

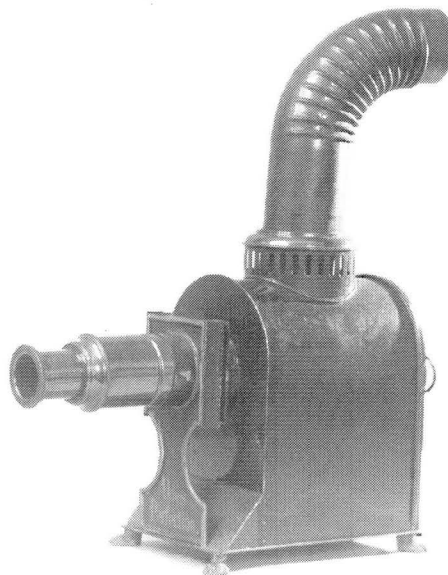
Here's the annual reminder. Society dues are payable on January 1 of each year. They must be paid by April 1 in order to maintain your membership. Dues for all members remain the same this year at only \$25 per family. Overseas members will find it quite easy to renew by using the PayPal account. Make Sharon a happy woman. She eagerly awaits hearing from you.

May your lantern shine brightly and all your slides be right side up. ■

HOW TO USE PAYPAL TO PAY YOUR SOCIETY DUES

By Bob Hall

Go to www.paypal.com and you will get the welcome page. Click on "sign up for your free Pay Pal account." Fill out form. You will be credited with \$5 for signing up. Once registered, go back to the welcome page and log in. When your "My Account" page comes up, click "Send Money." When page comes up, in the recipient's email box type in sharonkoch@prodigy.net and then type 25.00 in "Amount" box. Leave U.S. Dollars in "Currency" box. Choose "Service" in "Type" box. If you want to send a message to Sharon do so, but it is not necessary. Click "Continue" and a "Check Payment Details" comes up. If everything is correct click "Send Money." If not, click "Edit," make your corrections, click "Continue" and then "Send Money." That's all there is to it. ■





ON PHOTOGRAPHIC LANTERN SLIDES

By Tom Rall

Sometimes purchase of a single lantern slide will end up taking me down many roads. Such was the result with a slide I bought from an eBay listing in April 2002.

The slide itself, from my experience, was fairly spectacular—an unlabeled three-quarter length portrait of Union Civil War General (and future president) U.S. Grant standing in dress uniform. Striking a Napoleonic pose with right hand tucked inside a buttoned vest underneath a full length formal coat, Grant of course probably never dreamed his image would cause such excitement nearly 140 years later.

For me the excitements were many. First, formal studio portraits from the period are much more likely to be head and shoulders. Secondly, this slide also bore the enclosed mask (and also negative signature) of "F. Gutekunst, Photographer, No. 712 Arch St., Philadelphia." And these on eBay (two or three other listings from the same seller pictured more common head shots of lesser figures) were the first slides I had encountered by Gutekunst.

I also felt the Gutekunst connection meant the slide was probably made from a *carte de visite* (cdv) negative rather than from a stereoscopic negative, a rarity deserving further discussion; the question being what percentage of lantern slides were made from what types of negatives? And I thought the slide was possibly produced during the Civil War itself. Lantern slides actually made during the war, I am discovering, are quite rare.

So, one road upon which I embarked was the research road. I determined to investigate whether I could document my suspicions. I turned first to Bob Zeller's wonderful book, *Civil War in Depth, History in 3D*, Chronicle Books, San Francisco, 1997. An autographed copy can be ordered through Bob's equally impressive web site: www.civilwarphotography.com

A comprehensive index led me quickly to one listing for Gutekunst. This turned out to be a reproduction of a stereoview of the company's booth for selling photographic prints at a Philadelphia fair in 1864. Clearly visible hanging on the wall was a large head and shoulders vignette portrait of Grant.

Next I turned to *Cartes de Visite in Nineteenth Century Photography*, William C. Darrah, Author and Publisher, Gettysburg, PA, 1981, which verified Gutekunst as a prolific publisher of cdvs in the 1860s.

Further searches of Darrah's *World of Sterographs*, a 1977 classic reprinted in paperback by Land Yacht Press, Nashville, in 1977; and John Waldsmith's *Stereo Views*, Krause Publications, Iola, WI, 1991; revealed that Gutekunst also made stereo views, rarely encountered today, during the Civil War, most notably of the Gettysburg Battlefield.

While these references served pretty much to confirm that my Gutekunst slide was probably made from a period cdv negative, none solved the mystery—was my slide also made then?

Enter *Directory of Pennsylvania Photographers*, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1999. Because Pennsylvania, particularly

Philadelphia, photographers and photographic firms played a prominent role in the production and distribution of lantern slides in the 19th Century, this is a particularly recommended book.

According to the directory, Gutekunst, whose presence in Philadelphia photography dated to 1857, did not move to 712 Arch Street until 1867, after the war, where he was listed continuously until 1900. Alas, an assumption, upon which I had paid perhaps a record price for a Civil War related lantern slide, had proved erroneous.

However, this was not to be despaired because the purchase led to those many other exciting roads, still being traveled. The main course of these led from my home in Northern Virginia, through Washington, DC, and across the wonderful bridge spanning the Chesapeake Bay at Annapolis, MD!

Somewhere on the other side was my eBay seller, who wishes to remain anonymous, shepherding the disposal of a huge collection of lantern slides. Most of these, probably 6,000 slides, I would buy during three overnight trips during the course of several months last year. I still haven't looked at them all, but it turned out to be a cornucopia of 19th Century lantern slides production—a veritable who's who!

Many more are the roads upon which those slides are already traveling—some having been sold to people from all over the world, and some slated for future trips in my tow, including almost certainly a future slide presentation or two in places like San Antonio, Texas, and England!

Such roads traveled I hope to write about again!



VERMONT'S HAND-PAINTED THEATER CURTAINS

By Barbara Zucker

Those who slept late on Saturday, December 28, 2002 missed an interesting piece on "Weekend Edition" with Scott Simon. Interviewed was Christine Hadsel of the Vermont Painted Theater Curtain Project who described the work of a team of experts and volunteers who have located over 120 hand-painted theater curtains dating to the early 1900s. Hadsel specifically mentions magic lantern shows as a form of traveling entertainment that came to small towns.

A summary of the interview "Artifacts of Vermont's Era: Restoring Colorful, Hand-Painted Theater Curtains" is hopefully still online and a full transcript is available. I believed I used the words "Vermont" and "theater" to search and the one-page summary includes pictures of three screens. If all else fails, I downloaded the summary and would be happy to share it.

One other tidbit of news that might be of interest. The movie "Rabbit-Proof Fence" includes a magic lantern scene. When it comes out on video someone in the group will certainly want to analyze the equipment and slide format.

Ed. note: Attention, Larry Cederblom. Larry has an unusual hobby connected to his magic lantern collection. He records on tape, scenes from movies that show a magic lantern in use or in the background of a scene.

CORRECTION:

The December *Gazette* contained a "for sale" ad concerning a sizeable collection of slides. Unfortunately, the phone number in the ad is wrong. The correct number for Heather Eckles is 303-273-9646. She requests that calls be made before 6:00 p.m. Mountain time. Her e-mail is: cannonball@attbi.com

She is interested in selling her father's collection which numbers about 1,500 slides. Most are song slides and advertising slides plus many complete sets. Song slides seem to be dated in the 1910-20 period. She lives in Colorado. Her father is in Arizona and the slides are physically located in South Dakota. Any interest, give her a call.



THE *Gift* WITHOUT A BIRTHDAY



Never Grows Old.



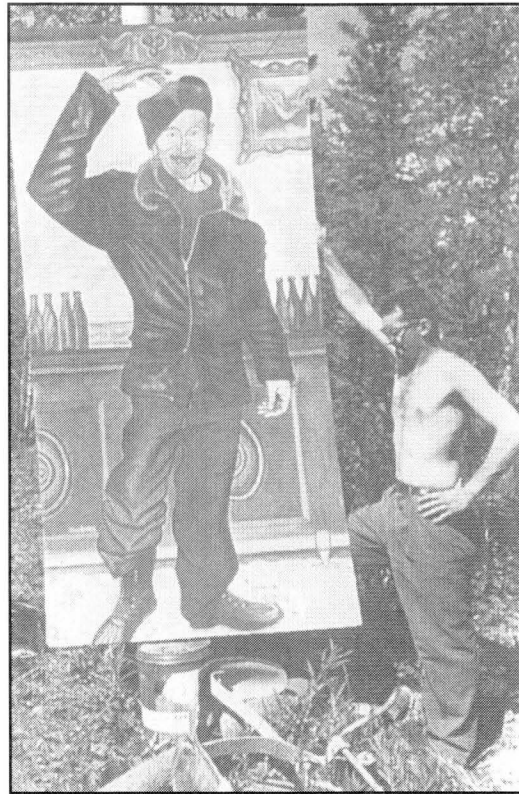
Chas. A. Kucera Jr.
Jeweler CRETE, Nebraska

KANSAS CITY SLIDE CO.

"SKIN JIM" ROBB

By The Old Projectionist,
Bob Bishop

Not all of the Magic Lantern Society membership have the magic lantern as a number one priority. Some have other vital interests but still manage to keep a hand in the games we play in this medium. Such a member is Five Percent Jim Robb of Whitehorse, Yukon. No longer "Skin Jim," but the zest is still there. The name "Skin Jim" was given him by First Nation Indian friends because at that period in his life he made a living drawing pictures on stretched moose hide. Harry and Annie Silverfox and their son Bill prepared, cured, and stretched the hides on willow poles. This was way back in 1956 when Robb first came to the Yukon.



Jim Robb

Self-deprecating, Jim has never considered himself a candidate for inclusion in the ranks of the colorful Five Percent, a designation he has used for over forty years to describe those people (living or dead) who by their lives and deeds added to the mystique, legends, and history of the Yukon and the days of '98.

I do not agree. Five Percent Jim Robb, our Yukon member of this society, was sixty-nine years young this last October. I first met him in 1989, although we had corresponded for several years. Even I misjudged his age. I have always thought him much younger.

A birthday: what is so unusual about a day so common to us all? But one must remember strange tales have come out of the Yukon, even to this day. So I am not going to insist that "blue" snow fell on Whitehorse or for that matter, the temperature was

anywhere near minus 64 degrees, two requisites for the emergence of the world famous "ice worms." (Robb's connection? He sold "ice worms" in Dawson City for a dollar a throw.)

Nor will I state that numerous "Sour Toe Cocktails" were served to the more than two hundred guests. But you may be sure that many present would have claimed to have enjoyed that Yukon treat.

The friends of Jim Robb headed by Donna Isaak, co-owner of The Discovery Lounge, along with Mike McLarnon sponsored a "roast" to honor Robb's 69th birthday and also to note his forty some years effort to promote and preserve the memory of those whose lives enlightened the lure of the Yukon. The evening was enhanced by Mrs. Doris Gates, dressed in a glittering turn of the century evening gown befitting her

title of Diamond Tooth Gertie which she held 31 years ago when the Diamond Tooth Gertie Gambling Hall was reopened by the Klondike Visitors Association. She and her husband Howard flew about 70 miles to Vancouver, B.C. and then on to Whitehorse for the occasion. Diamond Tooth Gertie entertained with her rendition of "Bill Bailey, Won't You Please Come Home." But probably the most appreciated was a Gold Rush Song entitled "Freckles On Her Butt." After Gertie's rendition of Gold Rush Camp songs, Jim was required to remove her garter the hard way, sans hands, by teeth only!

Our Jim is essentially a very shy person. He has little to say about himself. But the friends of Jim Robb will not let the matter lay. They feel Robb's life work is of worth, and consequently over three hundred letters have been collected and

mailed to Governor General Adriene Clarkson in Ottawa. The letters support the recommendation that Jim Robb be accorded the prestigious Order of Canada. This in recognition of Robb's forty some years endeavor to preserve, protect and memorialize the true tales and myths and those people (sourdoughs and more modern folk) whose lives inspired Robb to include them in his magazine, "The Colourful Five Percent."

His research, drawings, and storytelling are amply featured in his magazine.

Sources: Mrs. Doris Gates, "The Colourful Five Percent" magazine, and "The Whitehorse Daily Star."



MAGIC LANTERN SOCIETY CONVENTION

Business Meeting Minutes – June 30, 2002

Rochester, New York

(Sixty-six in attendance at business meeting.)

President Ralph Shape called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Secretary/Treasurer Sharon Koch read the minutes from the 2000 convention, and presented the Treasurer's Report, giving a balance of \$6,663.71, which does not include monies received for convention registration or convention expenses. There will be a convention expense report given at a later date.

Dorothy Easterday thanked the members who had volunteered to write articles about convention presentations, stating that she had them all, and would give them to Bob and Sue Hall for inclusion in the next *Gazette*.

Sue sent a message that the next issue is now at the printers and will be distributed soon. There was a unanimous vote to have our present *Gazette* editors continue with their excellent effort!

There was continuing discussion about combining the two Magic Lantern Societies. The point was made that one society would have a stronger voice. There was also a comment that perhaps an additional effort on our website could be made to welcome worldwide membership to our society.

Ralph commented that issues of Bob Bishop's book, "The Magic of the Lantern According to the Old Projectionist" are for sale. Those interested were instructed to check with Ed Lennert.

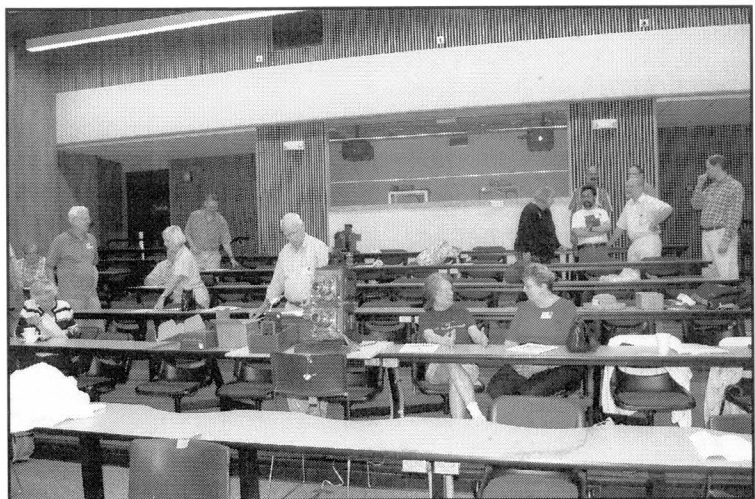


Website: It has taken time to develop additions to our website, and Larry Cederblom was thanked for taking the time to update. Larry stated that more will be done in the future, including photos from the convention. In answer to a question about requesting other websites to include our address, it was pointed out that many already have, and that we will work on that.

New Business: Ralph read the by-laws. It is important that we continue educating and sharing information regarding the magic lantern.

There was some discussion about changing the nomination and election of officers via mail. Any change to that procedure would entail a change to the by-laws by written ballot by the whole membership.

Homer Peabody announced, amidst



applause, that the present officers had been re-elected. Ralph Shape, President, Homer Peabody, Vice President, and Sharon Koch, Secretary/Treasurer, will serve until the next convention in 2004.

Homer was appointed to review by-laws and accept ideas to change them. Ralph read the by-laws section pertaining to amendments, and Terry Borton suggested a serious review.

The following points were made during discussion regarding Steve Tobin's Glass House display in the George Eastman House. John Davidson suggested the use of UV filters to protect the slides. Terry Borton didn't feel it appropriate for the society to take an official position on Steve's artwork. Many feel art is in the eye of the beholder. Karl Link reminded that slides were also displayed in such light at the Magic Castle in Hollywood. Larry Rakow commented that nothing lasts, and this display is another way of introducing the magic lantern subject to the public. Randy Haberkamp was concerned about the location of the house and its exposure to UV light. He felt that the public should be made aware that the slide images will fade. Ed Lennert volunteered to speak to the curator about the location and fading of the slides. There was an agreement that it would be good for Ed to follow through.

Awards: The gracious and ever youthful Betty Peabody presented the "Red Cabbage Award." There was a tie for runners-up between Dick Moore for his excellent program of piggy puffery, entitled "Puck and His Pig - The Sequel," and Lindsay Lambert, a marvelous entertainer who had an excellent eclectic showing of the various historical uses of the magic lantern.

First prize, however, was given to Larry Rakow, Professor Optix, for his unequaled and unrivaled showmanship and versatility.

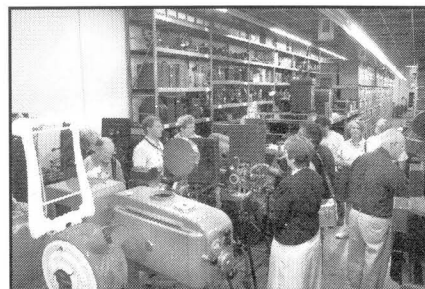
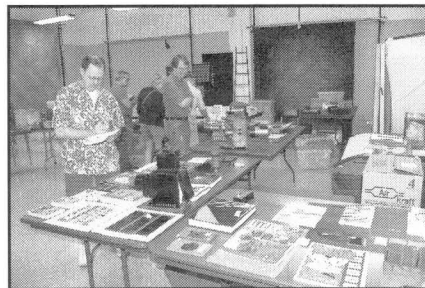
Ralph, with great dignity and savior faire gave the "Joe Koch Award" to the David Evans family for their excellent effort in researching and presenting a U.S. subject ("F. Jay Haines - Photographer of the West") and finding such an appropriate poem to accompany their recital. Honorable Mention went to the Kochs & Easterdays, and 2nd prize winner was Jack Judson for his ongoing valuable research on the whole subject of magic lanterns.

Betty thanked her committee for their esteemed help in making these awards.

Certificates of Appreciation: Ed Lennert was applauded for his time consuming and selfless work to make the convention a great success.

Larry Cederblom was thanked for his countless hours working on the *Gazette* and the society website.

Bob & and Sue Hall were recognized (even in their absence) as *Gazette* editors without equal.



Jack Judson received our appreciation for his years of dedication to the society.

Ralph Shape was congratulated for his excellent and tireless work as our society president.

For The Good of The Society: Jack Judson suggested that the society might benefit from a basic research committee for the purpose of collecting information regarding the magic lantern. Terry Borton made the point that we don't have as much context as we could for the collection we have amassed as a society.

It was moved, seconded, and approved that Terry and Jack lead this research committee. They asked for help from all members of the society in this task.

Next Convention: V-P Homer Peabody made a speech promoting San Antonio as an ideal location for the 2004 society convention. Jack Judson, with Texas charm, extended an invitation to the society, which was accepted with enthusiasm!

Point of Order: Randy Haberkamp asked if the "Red Cabbage Award" is being protected from UV rays!

Respectfully submitted by Sharon Koch, Secretary/Treasurer

Ed Note: The editors are sorry that these minutes were not included with the September Convention Wrap-Up Edition and believe they should be fired from their job.

MEMBERS IN THE SPOTLIGHT

The following article was sent by Harry Elsesser who attended this presentation and added, "Henry gave a wonderful show!"



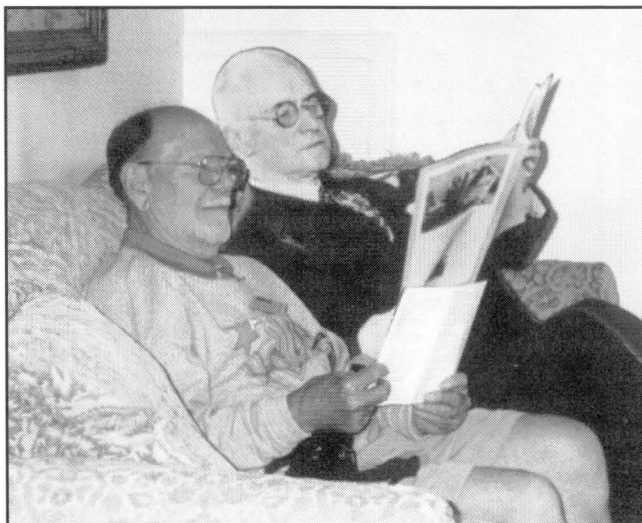
Henry Clark

Magic Lantern Show

Times Beacon Record, *January 9, 2003*

"A magic lantern show will be held at the Long Island Museum for American Art, History and Carriages, 1200 Route 25A, Stony Brook, on Sunday, January 12 beginning at 2 p.m. Magic lantern shows were a popular form of entertainment during the 19th century when itinerant lanternists would travel from town to town. Henry Clark, a member of the Magic Lantern Society of America, will be doing the hour-long show which will feature 50 antique slides and a lantern made in 1857. Call 751-0666, extension 212 to register."

We think the spotlight should also shine on Harry, who sent a photo from the Rochester Convention. It shows Harry sharing news of days past with George Eastman! The photo was taken at Eastman House last June 28.



Harry Elsesser and friend.



Lindsay Lambert left.

Letter from

Professor M. Lindsay Lambert

August 28, 2001

Dear Sue and Bob,

I have enclosed a copy of the article from Photographic Canadiana, which provides their website address for viewing 38 of my slides. It can apparently be narrowed down further by entering /lambert.html, but I don't know for sure. Being a typewriter and filing cabinet person, I have yet to see the website material.

I gave the show in Toronto on May 16th, for The Photographic Historical Society of Canada. It was my "regular" show.

A society representative called me to ask if I could give a show at their upcoming meeting. Their scheduled speaker had unexpectedly canceled. I at first declined, stating that I was very behind in my work. However, I reconsidered, and called the fellow back the following morning. Since I was already two months behind in everything, I figured that another couple of days out of my life wouldn't make much difference.



I have included a photocopied page from the October, 1995, National Geographic, showing a magic lantern show. It might be a good thing for the Gazette. As the Geographic is now available on computer disk, you could borrow a good image from that.

Best Wishes,
Lindsay Lambert

*Article from the Photographic Canadiana
Lanternist - Lindsay Lambert*

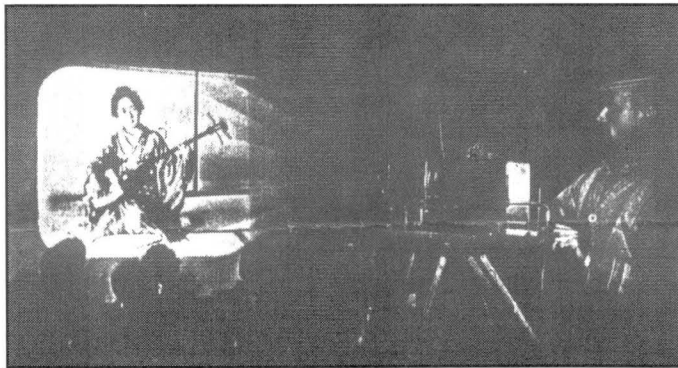
Flamboyant as a true showman, "Professor" Lindsay Lambert of Ottawa brought his polished brass magic lantern, his slides, his bells, and his whistles to our May meeting to let members experience the prime medium of entertainment of the Victorian era. Dating from 1657, lanterns with dim candle or oil lamp illuminants were used by galante showmen to entertain the few who were curious enough to watch. The application of lime light in 1838 enabled images to be projected to a screen for large crowds. Showmanship developed scripted lectures, dissolving lanterns, and full photography slides. Churches and temperance societies made good use to spread their message. When cinema technology drove the lantern into the background it was still used in colleges and schools or as a toy for children.



FROM THE ARCHIVES

Antarctic Late Show
National Geographic, October 1995

A geisha's silent strum enralls members of Capt. Robert F. Scott's British Antarctic expedition. Photographer Herbert G. Ponting presented a slide show to occupy his teammates,



confined by weather to their Cape Evans camp. A globe-trotting cameraman, he had just published a book of his Japanese photographs before setting off with Scott in 1910. Over the next two years Ponting took nearly a thousand photos. Expedition members, he noted, coined a verb in his honor: To pont, meaning "to pose, until nearly frozen, in all sorts of uncomfortable positions."

In January 1912 Scott and four men finally reached the Pole; they did not survive the trip back. Ponting, who had returned safely to England, spent the rest of his life keeping Scott's memory alive. The Geographic published the photographer's Antarctic landscapes and wildlife studies in December 1922 and March 1924.



MARKET FLEA OPENS MARKET

Submitted by Tom Rall

Washington, D.C. (January 2) The Flea Market at Eastern Market on Capitol Hill will celebrate its 20th anniversary by operating every Sunday for the first time, Tom Rall, manager, announced.

The new season begins Sunday, January 5. The popular flea market will continue to run both in and around the historic Eastern Market and also in the nearby playgrounds of Hine Junior High School. Both are located along Seventh Street SE within a block of the Eastern Market station on Metros orange and blue lines. Previously, Rall operated March through Christmas.

The new arrangement reflects increased popularity and demand for exhibitor space at the market since The Flea Market at Eastern Market was featured in *A Flea Market Documentary*, an hour-long program that debuted on the PBS network in July 2001, Rall said.

"If we also run for the full five years with Market 5 Gallery, I am proud to estimate that the flea market contribution will be more than \$300,000 in combined support for the schools and arts in the District of Columbia," Rall said. "Our total income for the whole first year of operation was less than \$10,000."

D.C. Government efforts to evict Market 5 Gallery and take over the flea market business have been contested by the gallery for more than two years in a case that has recently been scheduled for trial in June.

Ed note: The editors included this item so that anyone visiting the D.C. area will know to pay Tom a visit at the market. "Market Flea" is Tom's eBay name.



BITS AND PIECES

1. I have been in contact with a retired UTM professor from NW Tennessee who is also a Reelfoot Lake historian. He is currently searching for anyone with knowledge of a Hulen Hood, who may have done "magic lantern" shows sometime around 1913. Dr. Smith is researching the famed Reelfoot Lake Night Riders' trial (1914?) which took place in Lake County, TN. The trial received national attention, and there are photos in existence done by Southworth. If I understand correctly, Dr. Smith has found a reference to Mr. Hood taking a "moving picture" show re-

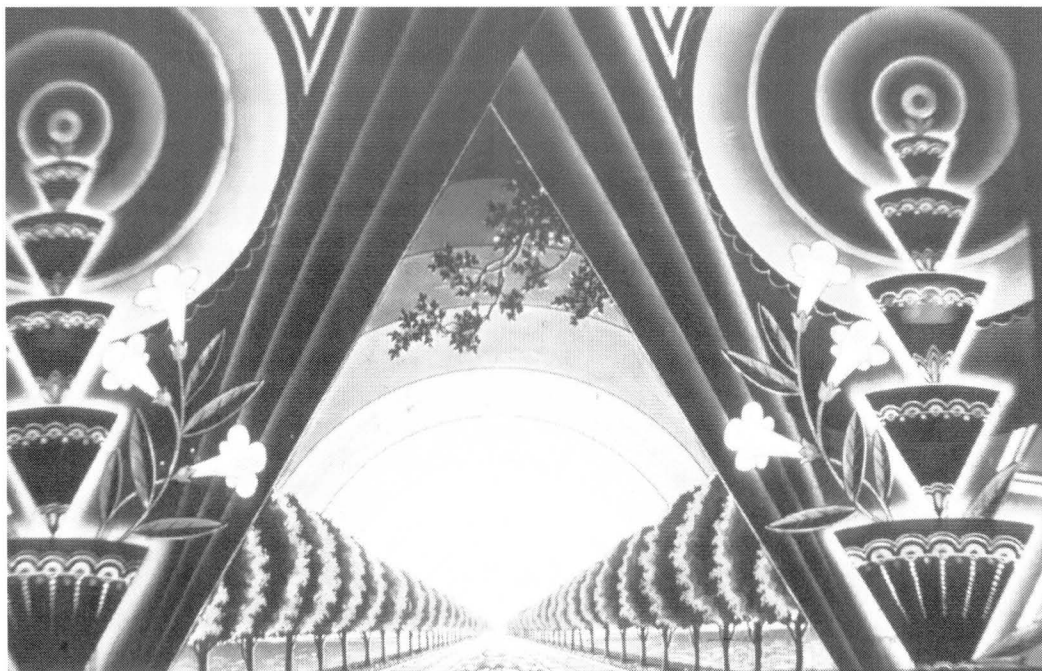
garding the trial on tour. He says that now the trial is cold. If you have any information about Mr. Hood or about a magic lantern show which depicted the trial, please contact me. Thank you. Sherri Fisher Hanna at www.fisherpip@yahoo.com.

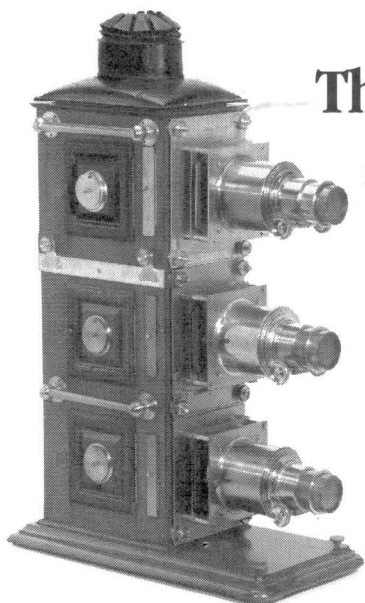
2. The book *The Magic of the Lantern* by Bob Bishop is available from First Book Library. Call 1-888-280-7715. Give them the author's name, the book title, and the ISBN 75962-193-4.

3. Also available is *Home Movies - A History of the American Industry, 1871-1979*, by Alan Kattle. Enfield Dist. Co. PO Box 699, Enfield, NH 03748. www.enfield@connriver.net, ISBN 0-965497-8-5.

CHANGE TO MEMBERSHIP BOOK

New address for Philip Wynn is 14726 Killion Street, Sherman Oaks, CA 91411.





At auction

The Cor-van-Mastrigt-Collection

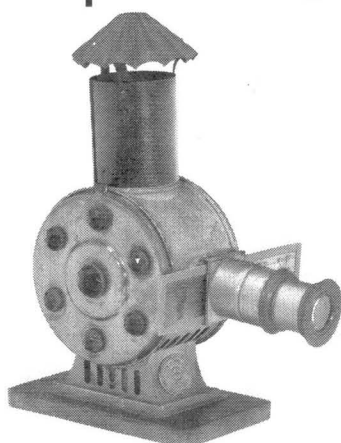
The most important Magic Lantern attraction in Spring 2003

25.-26. April 2003

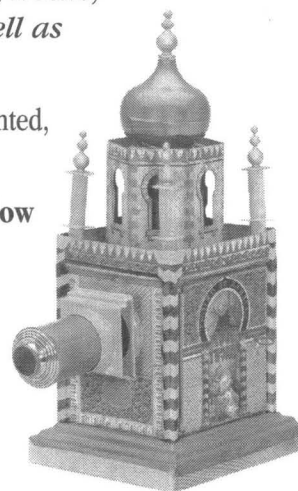
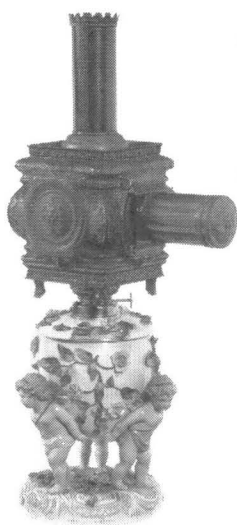
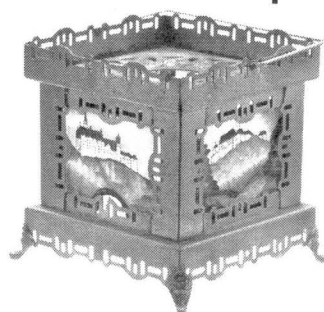
at Auction Team Breker in Koeln/Germany
the sale of the famous Dutch Cor-van-
Mastrigt-Collection of rare magic lanterns,
optical illusions and pre-cinema material.



**The Collection offers a great variety of all
magic lantern & optical illusions aspects, i.e.:**



- A superb mahogany/brass **The 'Wrench' Triple Lantern** ("made in London"), ready for performances with installed halogen lighting
- Extremely rare **Mantel clock with Magic Lanternist**
- The terrific **Laterna de Orient** by Jean Schoenner, Nuremberg
- Several **Lampascopes** with extraordinary rare lightings
- Various **Original Lithophane lamps and tea stoves**
- **Bi-unial Lantern**
- **About 150 tin toy magic lanterns**, i.e. *Aladin, Boule, Salon, Carree, Climax, Riche, etc.*, as well as *Phantasmagorien lanterns*
- A large variety of **magic lantern slides**, handpainted, mechanical, sets, etc.
- Several tin camera obscuras, Zoetrope, Shadow Theatre, Vue d'Optiques, early copperplate illustrations, etc.



See other side



This Specialty Auction also offers a wide variety of **cinematographs, movie projectors**, exceptional rare **16 and 35 mm movie cameras** and **pre-cinema items**, like **original Mutoscope** viewing machines and separately, very rarely offered **single reels** for everyone who wants to improve their "program", a number of **rare Stereo viewers, stereo slides**, i.e. exceptional rare **Original August Fuhrmann stereo slides (!)** for the famous Kaiser-Panorama.

A fully illustrated colour catalogue will be available at the end of March against prepayment of -26 Euros (Europe), - 35 Euros (overseas) at:

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To add to the excitement, the evening prior to the sale there will be a Special Reception with snacks and drinks followed by a fascinating

Magic Lantern Live Show

by the Vogl-Bienek Group.

